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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/028,336	12/22/2001	Emery W. Dilling	DLLU-1001	2801

30150 7590 03/16/2004

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EXAMINER

BARRETT, THOMAS C

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3738

DATE MAILED: 03/16/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/028,336

Applicant(s)

DILLING, EMERY W.

Examiner

Thomas C. Barrett

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 15 December 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-34 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 9-32 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7, 33 and 34 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 8 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 2.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

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DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

A telephone call was made by Dennis Gilstad on December 1, 2003 to elect Species I: Figure 1 directed to claims 1-8, 33 and 34.

Claims 9-32 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected Species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in the telephone call of December 1, 2003.

Specification

The lengthy specification has not been checked to the extent necessary to determine the presence of all possible minor errors. Applicant's cooperation is requested in correcting any errors of which applicant may become aware in the specification.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 33-34 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Eberhardt et al. (5,476,510). Eberhardt et al. discloses a heart valve prosthesis (10)

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comprising: a tubular body, flow control means (leaflets), discontinuous semi-rigid sewing flange (commissure posts, 38), and a sealing band (42). The commissure posts can be used for securing the valve to the patient.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1 and 3-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lane (5,037,434) in view of Yeo (5,908,451). Lane discloses a heart valve prosthesis comprising three semi-rigid sewing flanges (24, 26, 28) spaced about 115-130 degrees apart (FIG. 1), a circumferential groove (46), a circumferential tissue adherence band within the groove (116), flow control means (84) however Lane fails to disclose a flared inlet. Yeo teaches a heart valve prosthesis having a flared inlet (15), which helps to avoid boundary layer separation (col. 3, lines 52-54). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to combine the teaching of a heart valve prosthesis having a flared inlet, as taught by Yeo, to the heart valve prosthesis as per Lane, in order to avoid boundary layer separation.

Claim 2 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lane in view of Yeo as above. Lane discloses a heart valve prosthesis as claimed, however

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Lane fails to disclose the flange portions being spaced between 4 and 12 mm from the inlet end.

At the time the invention was made, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art to make the flange portions being spaced between 4 and 12 mm from the inlet end. Applicant has not disclosed that this distance provides an advantage, is used for a particular purpose, or solves a stated problem. One of ordinary skill in the art, furthermore, would have expected Applicant's invention to perform equally well with either length of the space of Lane or the claimed length because both would serve the same function and would be based on the size of the individual patient. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Lane to obtain the invention as specified in claim 2.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 8 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.


Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thomas C. Barrett whose telephone number is (703) 308-8295. The examiner can normally be reached Tuesday-Friday between 9:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Corrine McDermott can be reached on (703) 308-2111. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 872-9306 for regular communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0858.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Thomas Barrett', with a stylized, flowing script.

Thomas Barrett